

staffs, to take a look at the resolution because I would like to see cosponsors. I think we ought to have the 98 who voted last year for the resolution which I cosponsored with Senator MACK, and perhaps the two absentees as well.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I am pleased to rise in support of the resolution before us today to express the Sense of the Senate that the Federal commitment to biomedical research at the National Institutes of Health is one of our highest priorities in fiscal year 1999. This resolution states that Congress should increase the NIH budget by \$2 billion next year.

I would like to commend my colleague, Senator SPECTER, for his leadership in bringing this resolution forward today to ensure our commitment to biomedical research. I was an original cosponsor with Senator MACK of similar legislation, Senate Resolution 15, introduced on the first day of the 105th Congress. The "Biomedical Research Commitment Resolution of 1997," expressed the Sense of the Senate that the NIH budget should be doubled over the next five years. The resolution before us today puts us one step closer to achieving that goal.

I have struggled with the effort to balance the budget and preserve a strong federal role in biomedical research during times of fiscal restraint. As a member of the Senate Budget Committee, it will be my goal to increase the NIH budget within the context of the overall budget agreement reached by Congress last year.

Historically, Congress has demonstrated strong support for increased funding for the important work of the National Institutes of Health. The scientific and medical breakthroughs supported by the National Institutes of Health in the last 50 years have improved vastly our capacity to prevent, diagnose, and treat human disease. As a heart and lung transplant surgeon, I know that biomedical research is fundamentally important in our battle against disease. As Americans, we have the benefit of one of the finest health care systems in the world, and it is vital that we continue to invest in our research efforts to maintain this health care system.

As chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Public Health and Safety with jurisdiction over the NIH, I believe that one of the federal government's primary duties is to ensure our investment in long-term biomedical research as a public good. The commitment to this investment allows us to reap many benefits in improving the quality of life for our citizens. It is in this spirit that I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support the passage of this resolution in recognition that the future of our nation's health is dependent on our strong investment in biomedical research.

## AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

### COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 29, 1998, in open session, to receive testimony on the national security implications of enlarging NATO and the continued deployment of U.S. forces in Bosnia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 29, 1998, in open session, to receive testimony on the report and recommendations of the national defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### SUBCOMMITTEE ON SECURITIES

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Securities of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 29, 1998, to conduct an oversight hearing on market circuit breakers.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, the Finance Committee requests unanimous consent to conduct a hearing on Thursday, January 29, 1998 beginning at 10:00 a.m. in room 215 Dirksen.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

### SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS

Mr. GRAMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, be authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Thursday, January 29, 1998, to hold a hearing at 9:30 a.m. in SD-342 entitled *Medicare Fraud Prevention: Improving The Medicare Enrollment Process*.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

### CUBAN WOMEN AND CHILDREN HUMANITARIAN RELIEF ACT

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of Senator DODD's legislation, the "Cuban Women and Children Humanitarian Relief Act."

This bill, which is long overdue, authorizes the President to permit the sale of food, medicine, and medical equipment to the Cuban people. One would think that this would not be necessary. The United States has a long history of providing humanitarian assistance to needy people even when

we differ with their government. North Korea is an example. Yet, because of our obsessive antipathy toward Fidel Castro, we have applied a different standard to Cuba. Unfortunately, it is the Cuban people who have suffered as a result, not their government. In fact, it has given Fidel Castro a convenient excuse to blame the United States for whatever goes wrong there.

The American Association for World Health reports that malnutrition, deterioration of water quality, and serious deficiencies in medicines, equipment and medical information have resulted from American restrictions severely limit the sale of medicines they actually prohibit the sale of food. Not even the sanctions against Libya, Iran, and Iraq contain such extreme measures. This outright ban on food has been especially harmful to women and children, contributing to nutritional deficits among pregnant women and low birth-weight babies, as well as a high incidence of neurological disease.

I have long believed that the way to encourage democratic reforms and respect for human rights in Cuba is not through isolation of this tiny island nation, but through the normalization of our relationship by relaxing the embargo. One would think that after thirty-seven years, with Castro still in power, we would try another approach. Many Americans share this view. Over \$60 million in medicine and medical supplies have been donated by U.S. citizens over the past five years. Unfortunately, this great display of generosity represents only a tiny portion of the over \$400 million in medicines and food that Cuba imported from the United States prior to the passage of the restrictive 1992 Cuban Democracy Act.

I urge all Members of Congress to reconsider the reasons behind our embargo against Cuba. The Cold War ended years ago. Easing the restrictions on the sale and donation of medicines and food to Cuba will not, in any way, compromise our nation's security. While Pope John Paul's visit may not signal a political change in Cuba, it does illustrate a new opening by the Castro regime for religious expression that the United States should encourage. Passage of the Cuban Women and Children Humanitarian Relief Act would not only ease the suffering of the Cuban population, it would reaffirm to the world that the United States is the humanitarian nation we hold ourselves out to be. •

### TRIBUTE TO CHARLES H. CUFFELD

• Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to honor a distinguished public servant upon his retirement as President Judge of the Philadelphia Traffic Court. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Charles Cuffeld devoted his life to the city. Charles will be sincerely missed not only for the vision and leadership he brought to his office, but also for his integrity and character.